

BROAD CASTS TO SCHOOLS

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OPR: PLAY THEME

NARR: Hello boys and girls,

There is one name now that is always in the news - it's the name of a country far from Guyana - in what is known as the Far East - the name is Vietnam. I hope you have a map of the world before you, because it is very important to see where Vietnam is. When you see where it is you will begin to understand why there is so much trouble connected with the place. If you are looking at the map you will see in Asia the vast country of China. Look to the South of China and there you'll see the Name Hong Kong. Run your finger along the coast from Hong Kong southwards, and you'll soon come to a nicely curved coast - curved like a well made S. Along that "S" - shaped coast lies Vietnam. Now notice the northern end of Vietnam is snug under China. The southern end juts out towards Malaya.

But boys and girls, Vietnam is not one country it's two countries - north Vietnam and South Vietnam. And here is where the problems begin. And the trouble is connected to two big countries - the United States and China. Now I think you know that United States is the leading

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nation in what is called the Western World - by that phrase Western World people really mean not so much countries in the West but countries with the kind of Government called "Democratic". China is one of the two very big countries of what is called the Eastern Bloc - by that people mean that group of countries which have the kind of government called "Communist". Now I think you all know that the Democratic countries and the Communist ones are in keen competition. Each side wants to win over other countries to its camp. Sometimes the competition is peaceful - sometimes it comes pretty close to war.

Now at the moment, the competition is very keen in Asia. You see China and the U.S.A. are not even on speaking terms. Russian delegates can talk to American delegates. They can sit round a conference table and iron out their differences. But ^{it does seem as if} the Chinese and the Americans ^{do} ~~will~~ not speak to each other. And so they have a very dangerous kind of competition. And the place where it is worst is in Vietnam.

Remember we said that there were two Vietnams? North Vietnam and South Vietnam. Now North Vietnam is a Communist state and therefore in the camp as China. South Vietnam has a non-Communist Government and is a friend of the United States. But although they're so close together the two Vietnams are at daggers drawn with each other and through these two smaller countries China and America, two giants are really getting at each other. South Vietnam is the battle ground. You see they are a number of people in South Vietnam who object to its friendship with America. They want it to be friendly with China and Russia. So they have for a long time been in rebellion against their government.

Naturally the government has tried to stamp ~~out them~~, ^{this out} but Vietnam is a country of high mountains and deep forests - a lot of bush country. And in this bush and between the mountain a guerrilla war goes on. You know what guerrillas are like don't you? They shoot in the dark - they ambush - they hide in the bush then suddenly attack and disappear. These guerrillas who are trying to overthrow the south Vietnam government are called the "Viet Cong" and they are excellent and deadly fighters.

The United States and a lot of other people too are certain that the Viet Cong are being helped by the North Vietnamese and the Chinese. It seems as if they get their guns and other weapons from these outsiders. Many north Vietnamese deny this. They say it's a civil war in south Vietnam.

Recently things have been getting hotter and hotter and the U.S.A. planes have bombed places in north Vietnam where they believe help is going to Viet Cong. There is danger if this situation continues. For China will most probably go to the help of north Vietnam and a real war can break out between herself and the United States using both north and south Vietnam as the battle fields. So what is to be done?

Well for one thing Russia does not seem to like what is going on in Vietnam. The Russians you see, know what a big war between two big countries nowadays can mean and so they appear to be putting a brake on China to stop her helping north Vietnam. But will the Chinese listen to Russia? We are not sure. What about the Viet Cong guerrillas perhaps they may be beaten down in south Vietnam with the help of the United States. But as long as the Americans are helping in the fight against them then the Viet Cong guerrillas will turn the north Vietnam or China for help.

So the situation is very explosive as we say. There seems to be no easy way out. The British are trying to get all sides to meet at Geneva where sometime ago they held a conference to reach a settlement. The best hope ^{lies} ~~like~~ in the fact that Russia does not want war with the United States and United States too does not want war with Russia. Russian Prime Minister Mr. Kōsygin gets on better with China than ~~with~~ Krushchev did. This too gives cause for hope. All we can do is ^{look} ~~watch~~ on. So boys and girls keep your eyes and ears open for news about Vietnam for it's one of the worst danger spots in the world today.

So long then until next week.

OPR: Play theme